

Instructions for 1st task of the Group Assignment

i. Get in touch with your group members and decide whether you want to do the contemplation exercise (Exercise ii) as a group or individually, and begin discussions about which existential question (part 3) you will explore

ii. A secular contemplation exercise: Audio recording of these instructions will be available soon.

- Sit with back upright but relaxed
- Start with the eyes relaxed and half-closed
- Let the eyes stay half-closed, or open, or close...
- Allow a few deeper breaths, but don't strain
- Let the breathing do its own thing, and be with the breathing
- Try and find the 'who' that is breathing, the seat of your attention, the 'you' in all this
- Let go of any trying
- Just be with, and be OK with, whatever is arising (thoughts, emotions, sounds, images, whatever...)

iii. What are the major existential crises (plural) your group identifies in our only home, planet earth? Choose one (or more) of these crises, not necessarily the most related to this course, that you would like to investigate in terms of root causes (including inappropriate human attitudes and behaviour) and possible ways for humanity to negotiate its way through the crisis you have identified (including promoting appropriate human attitudes and behaviour). Provide an essay with 1 page per student member (so 5 pages for a group with 5 members). The essay can be passionate and express 'angst', it is not a language test, but some well-referenced fact-based material should also be included! You may use AI but please think critically and list all references (including Chat GTP, Grammarly, etc.). Any large chunks of text taken from any source should be put in quotation marks with a citation, e.g.,

"To be or not to be", Shakespeare, William. Hamlet. Edited by G. R. Hibbard, Oxford UP, 2008.

If you have time and are willing, repeat Exercise ii as a group after collectively creating the essay!